This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

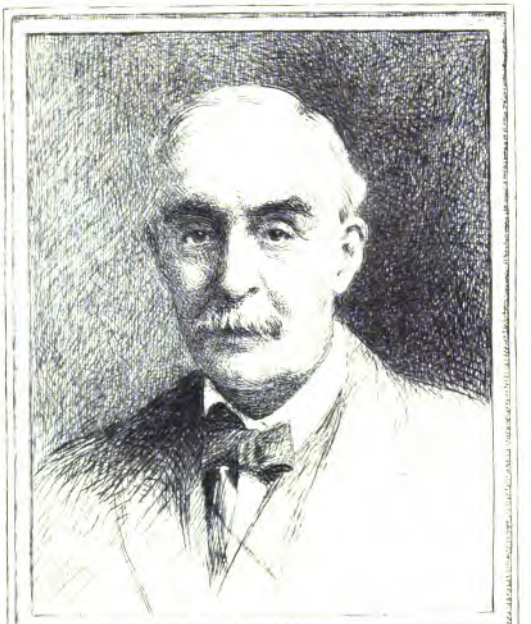
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

F
574
.D4
H87

A 403530



FROM THE LIBRARY OF
ROBERT MARK WENLEY
PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY
1896 — 1929
GIFT OF HIS CHILDREN
TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

A LITTLE JOURNEY
to
L. B. KING & COMPANY'S

An Appreciation By

ELBERT HUBBARD

F
574
.D4
H87

L. B. KING AND COMPANY'S STORE

A LITTLE JOURNEY TO

L. B. KING & Company's

Being an Appreciation by
ELBERT HUBBARD

Done into Print by *The* Roycrofters
at their Shop, which is in East Aurora, Erie County, New York

MCMXIII

L. B. KING AND COMPANY'S STORE

UNIV

A LITTLE JOURNEY TO

L. B. KING & Company's

Being an Appreciation by
ELBERT HUBBARD

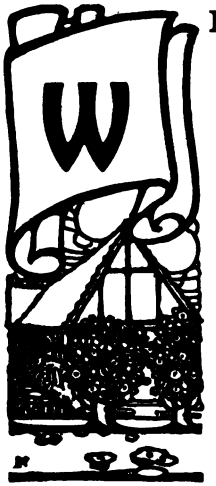
Done into Print by *The* Roycrofters
at their Shop, which is in East Aurora, Erie County, New York 3.

MCMXI

F
574
.D4
H87

Copyright, 1913
By Elbert Hubbard

A LITTLE JOURNEY TO L. B. KING & COMPANY'S



HEN a stranger, who knows the capitals of Europe, comes to Detroit, he lifts his hands in admiration and says, "La Belle Paree!"

In fact, out of all our American cities Detroit is the one that has a distinctly Parisian atmosphere.

Detroit was originally laid out with a definite, artistic ideal in mind. There is a Grande Circus and a Campus Martius, which makes you think the city was designed by Napoleon, or by some one who had studied his plans and admired him.

The Campus Martius in Detroit is not a Camp of Mars, however, except in a poetic way. It is a space two hundred by six hundred feet square, from which eight streets and avenues diverge. It is a noble breathing-spot, surrounded by business institutions that pal-

pitate with healthful, joyous activity ❧ In some ways Detroit has gone beyond Paris. Paris is run on momentum. She points to the past ❧ If you had visited Paris twenty-five years ago and should go there now you would be absolutely at home ❧ You would see no change ❧ ❧

But Detroit is a new city; it has practically been born again within ten years' time.

The original plans provided for a city of one hundred thousand inhabitants. Beyond this the worthy men who had Detroit in charge could not imagine. But it is good to see that the original idea has been preserved, so the city has evolved and expanded in units ❧ Detroit has twenty-one public parks and upwards of one hundred open squares, sacred flowers, fountains and beauty. From these, radiating avenues diverge.

Thirty-five thousand loaded ships go by Detroit every season, and a good many of these tie up and do business here.

Detroit has the largest dry dock on the Great

Lakes. It has seven great trunk-line railroads. ¶ In Nineteen Hundred the factories of Detroit produced goods to the extent of one hundred million dollars. In Nineteen Hundred Ten the total goods manufactured in Detroit were worth two hundred ninety million dollars. ¶ Detroit paid out in wages in Nineteen Hundred Twelve more than seventy-five million dollars.

It is the pay-envelope that makes a city prosperous

Iron, steel, steam-fittings, stoves, architectural iron works, chemicals and druggists' products, furniture, carriages, paints, varnishes, and most of all, well I should say, yes—automobiles!

The city of Detroit produces seventy-five per cent of all the automobiles used in America

The population of Detroit in Nineteen Hundred was three hundred thousand. Today it is six hundred thousand; and if you want to rent a house in Detroit you will have to look quite a while before you find one.

Detroit has splendid hotels, but you will see cots made up every night in the hallways ❧ Detroit is prosperous.

In various respects it is the most beautiful city in the United States, and the hospitable courtesy of its citizens has made it the " Convention City " of America.

"King's Ware"

IF one wants to find any one particular store that mirrors the mental attitude of the city, I would say it is the house of L. B. King and Company.

I moused through this most interesting institution for the better part of a day, recently. In fact, to be absolutely truthful, I have attended eight conventions in Detroit this last year, and on each occasion I have peeked in on "King's."

L. B. King and Company have been in business since Detroit was paved with good intentions.

In fact, it is sixty-four years since the House of King was established in Detroit, by Robert W. King, father of L. B. King, the present head of the institution.

As Detroit has evolved and grown, so have L. B. King and Company grown.

In Detroit they do not talk about Queensware—it is always King's Ware.

It is a somewhat curious thing that China,

the country that evolved the making of tableware from clay, burning it, decorating it, beautifying it, has been more or less eclipsed by its competitors.

Every time, however, that we use the word "China" we pay a compliment to our slant-eyed brothers across the sea—clever, ingenious, skilful.

L. B. King and Company have one floor largely devoted to china that comes from the Orient. But you will find represented in this superb store all of the great manufacturers of exquisite tableware, the round world over.

There is a belief that Wedgwood ware is no longer manufactured, but that what passes for Wedgwood really covers a multitude of artistic sins

Etruria, that wonderful manufacturing plant where "Wedgwood" is made, built after the model of a university, still endures.

Josiah Wedgwood was born in Seventeen Hundred Thirty, and passed away in Seventeen Hundred Ninety-five.

From the son of an indifferent potter, who made beer-jugs for Liverpool brewers, Wedgwood not only became a great artist and a great businessman, but also one of the intellectual lights of England.

Let it not be forgotten that Wedgwood's daughter was the mother of Charles Darwin.

¶ In point of modern factory betterments Josiah Wedgwood was one hundred fifty years ahead of his time. Some day we will catch up with Josiah Wedgwood.

Working for Wedgwood was a youth by the name of John Flaxman, and to Flaxman are we debtor for those gracious, graceful, dancing Greek figures in white on a background of blue that form the distinguishing feature of "Wedgwood."

The fifth generation of the Wedgwood family is now in control of Etruria, and the exquisite creations of Flaxman are being reproduced as they were one hundred years, and more, ago.

¶ Only a few merchants in America handle the genuine Wedgwood. To be exact, my

errand at L. B. King and Company's the last time I was in Detroit was to see their display of genuine Wedgwood. I was directed thither by letter from my friends at Etruria in England. And so, when I spent a week recently at a certain theater in Detroit, I took occasion one fine day to go to the store of King and Company, and look the place over from cellar to roof.

Not only did I see a wonderful display of Wedgwood, but I saw various other things in the line of tableware and housekeeping requirements such as you can not see, but in precious few places in America. In truth, I know of no other store in America that has devoted itself so completely to the display of exquisite tableware as L. B. King and Company have.

This store is not only a store—it is an exposition, a school, if you please, where the finest displays of hand and brain in the way of ceramics are shown.

"Commercialism" and "Art"

I HAVE heard of L. B. King and Company for many years; and I used to have the idea it was a very exclusive concern that appealed to people only who had money to incinerate

I recently discovered, however, visiting the place as a customer, that while L. B. King and Company handle all exquisite art lines of tableware that are manufactured in England, Holland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and China, yet their prices are very reasonable

Everything is handled on a strictly "commercial" basis; that is to say, the prices are commercial prices and not art prices. Commercial prices represent cost, plus a fair per cent of profit to cover cost of handling. Art prices are anything that the customer is able to pay. The usual plan is to find how much money the man has, and strike him accordingly, first gauging his gullibility.

If you buy art goods of L. B. King and Com-

pany you get them at a moderate per cent of advance over manufacturers' costs, which is fair, reasonable and right.

The Complete Shop

THE first requisite in showing china and glass is good light and plenty of it ❧ The building occupied by L. B. King and Company was built with their own especial needs in mind.

It is six stories high, and every floor is filled with exquisite goods.

Here everything is in motion. Customers come, not only for hundreds, but for thousands of miles, to make their selections.

Truth is a very important factor in the purchase of tableware. Very few of us know much about china in a technical way, but L. B. King and Company are experts and adepts in this particular line ❧ ❧

Their information is at your disposal, whether you wish to buy or not. If you merely want to look around and examine, you are just as welcome as if you came with intent to purchase. If you desire information it is given. If you want to walk around without attention, you are quite welcome to do so.

This store belongs to the people, and L. B. King and Company are great public servants. ¶ Truth is the cornerstone of this institution. Courtesy, kindness, good-will here abound. The light that streams through this building from the generous plate-glass windows reflects, poetically, the quality of spirit that here abides

At night the various floors are lighted by indirect illumination. Soft, mellow, beautiful light pervades and prevails.

If you want Royal Worcester, such as was used by King George the Seventh, L. B. King and Company will supply you these plates at seventy dollars a dozen—which is exactly what they would cost you in London.

You will not be required to buy the entire set. ¶ L. B. King and Company carry more than one hundred open-stock patterns of dinnerware, which means that you can buy one dish or five hundred and the price will be simply pro rata

If one wants to study the wonders of artistic

tableware, I do not know a better place to visit than L. B. King and Company's.

The various great makers of ceramics seem to have distinct and peculiar styles of their own. For instance, I found at King's samples of Coalport ware at two hundred twenty-five dollars a dozen.

Here is Doulton in profusion; Wedgwood galore; Rookwood and Delft and Dresden—beautiful, delicate, exquisite beyond a poet's dream

If you have time and wish to be told, the courteous salespeople will explain to you the difference between Adams' Sheraton and Italian China. They will tell you of Mettlach, where are made in an old monastery on the Rhine the finest steins in the round world, and more of them. If you have a friend who is a stein fiend, here is the place to buy him a present.

Here are rows and rows of steins, some trimmed with pewter, others decorated with true Teutonic inscriptions and designs.

Persia ships jardinieres, nested, to L. B. King and Company, Detroit. They are sold by the pound, somewhat after the new law in some of our States, which requires eggs, potatoes, tomatoes and Hubbard squash to be sold likewise, on penalty. But who would think that Persia, the home of booth and bazaar, would sell ceramics by the pound and in no other way!

Every country has its peculiar and distinguishing earmarks ❧ ❧

Individuality writes itself in manufacturing; and everything that a man thinks with his head and makes with his hands looks like him. We create in our own image. So from the uttermost parts of the earth, wherever man works clay up into exquisite forms and fires it in kilns, the best that is produced goes to Detroit ❧ ❧

Then American ware must not be forgotten, for the Lenox Belleek of Trenton, New Jersey, is a ware that compares with anything produced across the sea. At King's you 'll find it

in profusion. ¶ America leads the world in cut glass—just as we lead the world in the manufacture of shoes, electric appliances, and dentistry. ¶ L. B. King and Company have one room devoted to glass, just cut glass and nothing more.

Glass it seems is a substance that has to be shown by itself. It shuns competition with things of color.

Cut glass for presents is always in order ❧ Weddings, anniversaries, birthdays—young or old—cut glass is never out of style. Would you know about cut glass, its history, where it is made, and how, take the children and go to King's, and hear what the salesman says. ¶ Of course the lecture is optional—if you wish to look in silence, it is your precious privilege.

Rookwood Pottery

L. B. KING AND COMPANY are the Detroit agents for the famous Rookwood Pottery. All America has reason to be proud of Rookwood ❧ The clays used are American, and the artists who work out these things of beauty are for the most part American, too.

The Rookwood decorators are mostly graduates of the Art Academy of Cincinnati ❧ In fact, one might say that the Art Academy is a sort of annex to Rookwood. Rookwood has a jealous eye on the Academy, and any student who shows rare skill is " signed up," as Hughie Jennings would say.

In Rookwood there are no duplicates. There may be pieces that look more or less alike, but as Rookwood uses no printed patterns it is not possible to get two pieces exactly alike.

Rookwood, as we all know, inclines toward the yellows, the browns, the russets, the idea being gotten, of course, from the various tints in Nature which we see " when the frost

is on the pumpkin and the fodder's in the shock."

Also it is worth while to remember that when you parse " Rookwood " you have to put it in the feminine gender.

The Rookwood Pottery was founded by a woman, and the management of this wonderful place is still largely looked after by women, the new type of American woman—who is not only a housekeeper but a housekeeper plus. She is a business woman, an artist, a decorator, and an architect.

Nowhere in America, not even at Rookwood itself, can you find a more exquisite display of Rookwood than you will see at L. B. King and Company's

The day I made my last Little Journey to L. B. King and Company's, there was a delegation of fifty students from one of the Detroit High Schools; and, on request of the teacher, a King and Company salesman, who certainly is a prince in his line, told us about the evolution of the Rookwood ware.

This particular salesman, I found out afterward, has been in the employ of L. B. King and Company for thirty-five years. He lives in a sort of Dresden atmosphere. China is his specialty. He dreams of it at night, thinks of it in the daytime, and is n't happy unless he is in a Rookwood atmosphere.

If King and Company sold nothing else but Rookwood, they would have a business on hand

Detroit's Great Showplace

IF you want Christmas presents, or presents for any joyous occasion, you could not do better than to drop in at King's.

The artists of the world, from every civilized country, and barbaric lands as well, have contributed their best.

There are other things beside china in the strictest sense. For instance, desk-sets, smoking-sets, tobacco-jars and other things for men who are good sports, as all good Americans are now; Sheffield plate without limit; baskets from Japan; wicker from China; cutlery, chafing-dishes, percolators, curious glassware, with tumblers, fruit, salad and wine glasses, and dishes of a kind and quality that make duplication well-nigh impossible.

¶ The cheap, the tawdry, the bargain-day are out of vogue for the well-to-do American.

¶ That Detroit should support this store that deals in the world's most artistic things, is greatly to the credit of the city whose site is on " the American Dardanelles."

Art comes from the surplus that businessmen accumulate. Prosperous people have beautiful homes and wish to have them furnished accordingly. The wise housekeeper knows where her beautiful fabrics and exquisite wares come from and how they are produced. This is education. When you buy, buy of the people who specialize, who can give you not only the goods, but reliable information concerning them.

All Detroit, I found, was proud of L. B. King and Company's wonderful institution. Many Detroiters take their visiting guests to King's as a part of the great show which Detroit has to offer; and as the people of Detroit are proud of King's, so is Michigan proud of Detroit, and in fact all America knows Detroit; for, look out of the window anywhere, in any city of America, and you will not gaze more than a minute or two before you see passing by evidence of Detroit's skill in the line of manufacturing

L. B. King and Company's is one of the oldest

established business houses in Detroit. The success of the place is no accident. It has grown slowly, surely, step by step. It mirrors the great primal virtues of industry, economy, courtesy, kindness and human service.

L. B. King and Company prosper as their customers prosper

The people who buy here are proud of their purchases

The place is not built up on one-trade transactions. L. B. King and Company have a clientele who have traded here for three generations

Whether you wish to purchase or not, call on King's and enjoy, as I did, the pleasure of seeing these exquisite things, created through the brain of genius and the cunning of human hands